From fig Tue Apr 23 08:55:21 1991
Date: Tue, 23 Apr 91 08:55:15 pdt
From: fig (Cliff Figallo)
To: elliot, kerwit, kk, mew, sbb
Subject: price change
Cc: tex

So far, we have gone through the raw data files and found this information:

--

Month	Hours	Users	Avg Hours
6/90	10322	1769	5.83
7/90	11670	1885	6.19
8/90	11813	2016	5.86
9/90	11815	2031	5.82
10/90	11432	2068	5.53
11/90	11176	2093	5.34
12/90	11427	2179	5.24
==== change to $2/hour ====			
1/91	14565	2270	6.42
2/91	13218	2337	5.66
3/91	14640	2544	5.75

I'm tracking this information through our billing database to see how it translates into our financials. I will be working with Mike to do a more sophisticated statistical analysis.

Session Name: 97.0.0.1

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&

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
By: David Hawkins (dhawk) on Thu, Jul 11, '91
41 responses so far

<topic is retired>
<topic is frozen>
<linked topic>

Well, I'd written out a long posting, but decided to condense it:

Cliff (fig) created a new position of someone to be in charge of the technical aspects of the WELL and selected John Hoag (loca) to fill that position. I was not informed of this at the time and learned about it just before leaving on vacation. I protested since the position had not be advertised and I thought that I'd put in enough time around here to be qualified for it. Cliff said, "Tough." I said, "I quit."

I am very bitter about how this whole thing was handled. I do know that it is not a wise move to quit a job until the new job is lined up, but in this case did not feel I could continue to work at the WELL.

41 responses total.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
1: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (06:29) 1 line

(The wording for Cliff above is a paraphrase.)

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
2: Poster has the day off. (casey) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (06:34) 1 line

I'd feel a lot better about this if it were April 1.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
3: Line noise may have mangled this. (rik) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (06:36)
1 line

Even that wouldn't do it for me.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
4: Axon, A Man and His Ilk (axon) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (06:41) 7 lines

!!!

hard to believe. harder still to live with. wtfigo on gate 5 road these days, anyway?!?

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
5: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (06:45) 7 lines

(I started this in Misc and any host who wants to link it can do so)

I'm not sure what's going on. One hand they tell me they trust me, love me, and appreciate me. On the other hand they won't even consider me for the position even though for much of the past 4 years I was the only full-time staff person handling the tech stuff. They also believe I'll be easy to replace.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
6: The 53 is also invisible (rik) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:17) 2 line
s

Don't know much about tech. For me, the WELL is personalities, intellects, and friendships. There's gonna be a big hole around here.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
7: the song of the modem bird (lp) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:19) 13 lin
es

This is horrible. I'm so sorry, David. Does this have to do with the new ownership? Does this have anything to do with Kenton? Gosh, I know, someone's going to jump in here and squeal about how no private business has to explain themselves and that I ask too many questions anyway, but as Jeanne so eloquently put it WTFIGO? Who says private business *isn't* responsible to its clients?

I'm just sorry, David. Yours is one of the most visible and helpful presenses here and I would hate to see you not here.

Isn't something connected to "Whole Earth" supposed to be *different*?

???????

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
8: linda d. misek-falkoff (ldmf) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:20) 8 lines
Suffering a deep head to chill reading this. Not to smile! All persons mentioned above have been very helpful and of good humour to me and I trust oall others. DHAWK, you've been indispensible. Not only sending brief, clear, but cheerful helps (many trouble shouters growl alot), but your witty add on's to traditional classic wisdom (like sign off time last night) are incredible. Accepting these postings on their face as "real" .... Please change your mind. Each of you is a WELLsaint.
.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
9: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:22) 14 lines

Oh, a couple of other thoughts: a word of reassurance -- I have removed myself from superuser/root access. I'm not going to crack or destroy the WELL. However, this means I can't fix things anymore, so please do not send requests for technical help to me. I'm already find that frustrating, plus I have 400 pieces of mail from my week of 'vacation' (where I sat around and fumed about this situation.)

Also, one of the first indications I had that something was up was when it was announced in a staff meeting that a 10 page document had

been written that would take care of the WELL's technical problems. I was startled since (1) I didn't write it, and (2) I'd not seen it. But it does seem that loca does have a plan to fix everything around here.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
10: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:24) 4 lines

>change your mind

It's a stalemate. Cliff refuses to consider me for the position and I won't stay unless considered for it.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
11: linda d. misek-falkoff (ldmf) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:26) 8 lines
sorry, meant "head to toe chill," but wouldn't take airspace for THAT! Wanted to say .. arguendo this is real, but even if not for any WELLbeing who posts here, and trust me on this, don't don't don't quit. I didn't quit or stuff like that but I know, it's not a good time, and later explaining may be impossible. You might find yourself on one side of a legal "v", or endlessly explaining or explaining the explaining. I AM OLDER, now, a momma-type ... y'll stick it all for the nonce. You could stay in a closet and bbs or nintendo, or eat sandies. Better, L.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
12: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:29) 4 lines

Actually I did get a call about a job offer while I was on vacation. I'll be returning that call this morning. Somebody wants me to setup and run a conferencing system. Hope I'm qualified! 8-)

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
13: why can't I change the world without changing myself? (slf) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:30) 6 lines

Oh, man. My sympathies, dhawk. That is extremely bizarre. Losing either Kenton or Dhawk seems to me really bad in terms of technical continuity, and now we're losing *both* of them in one swell foop?

It sounds from here like you guys are being the scapegoats for all the technical complaints that users have.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
14: why can't I change the world without changing myself? (slf) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:31) 1 line

By the way, anybody want to take bets on how long this topic exists?

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
15: Poster has the day off. (casey) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:36) 23 lines

A little bit of history: When I signed on to the WELL 4 years ago, dhawk was doing tech stuff here and helping newusers (although he wasn't sysadmin at the time) and loca was living in NYC and hosting weird and writing romance novels. Over the years, dhawk became sysadmin and loca has learned

some C programming.

Apparently, loca flew into town with this 10-page proposal to "improve the WELL" (Cliff and Nancy being the only ones, apparently, who knew why he was here). As part of this proposal, he suggested that the WELL staff be divided into "departments", and (at his suggestion or Cliff's) that loca himself be "technical director". Again, no one else on the staff knew anything about this, least of all David. It was presented to dhawk as a f'ait accompli.

I've met John Hoag and think he's a "nice guy", so this has nothing to do with loca insofar as my own feelings about this are concerned, although he might have purposefully aced Daved out of a job that David deserves. But that's neither here nor there because loca isn't the person who makes the decisions. I will not mince words here: Of all the incredibly DUMB things that have ever happened on the WELL, this has to be the dumbest of all. Why not just INSULT the most technically proficient, most hard-working and best-liked employee on the WELL??? It's an act of monumental thoughtlessness and stupidity.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
16: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:42) 5 lines

Hmm, Kathleen knows stuff I don't. I was feeling pretty paranoid for a while because it was clear that things were going on that I had not been informed about.

(I also couldn't have spelled "f'ait accompli") 8-)

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
17: Robert Lauriston (duck) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (07:50) 9 lines

Who owns the Well, anyway? I knew the answer once, but I've forgotten.

This only makes sense if Well management decided that the Well's technical problems (outside of some rough upgrades--par for the course--I haven't noticed any) were David's fault, and the only way to fix them was to bring in someone else. That seems unlikely to me. In any case, unless the owners make peace with David, we'll find out soon enough whether this is a case of fixing something that wasn't broken.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
18: Roger Karraker (roger) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (08:29) 4 lines

David, I'm sorry that you are leaving and especially under such circumstances. I wish there was a way that you could somehow negotiate this blow to your pride and manage to stay on. You are needed and appreciated by all of us.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
19: Hoover Chan (hchan) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (08:34) 3 lines

I'm disappointed. This isn't the way to treat people who are such assets here. There should have been more communications as to what was coming down.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
20: Not the Sanest Person on the WELL (kls) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (08:41)
20 lines

Holy Shit!

I'm simply boggled.

Before saying more, I must disclose that I applied for and (obviously) didn't get the "tech support" job that Matisse is now doing.

It's just incredible that this could have been so terribly mishandled. It conflicts very strongly with my sense of how the WELL operates "on the other side of the screen." And, frankly, that previous sense was the reason I applied to work there.

David, I'm sorry to hear about this. You seem such an integral part of the WELL and have done so much. While there may be other skilled systems administrators out there, I can't imagine anyone approaching your skills in handling the social dynamic of WELL culture. And, frankly, (with all the flaws and flames) that culture is the only product the WELL has, as far as I'm concerned. It's the only reason that most people have been willing to put up with the gross ineptitude on the communications side.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
21: Tina Loney (onezie) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (08:46) 5 lines

Dhawk, I also will miss you. You were among my first friends on the WELL.

But I'm going to reserve judgement on the situation until I hear all sides, and I bet there are more even than two.....

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
22: Don't Dis me (matisse) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:10) 24 lines

This is very strange.

I would you to stay David... of course I don't really know what is goinmg on... this topic is the first I've heard of this (for people's information, although I will be working doing customer support at the WELL I have been out of town untill last night and don't start 'til Monday)

Oh boy is this gonna be a long discussion :-)

I would really like to see a lot of on-line discussion of what has been going on internally at the WELL. I can also see a lot of reasons why the WELL management would not be able to do that ng things up for itslef and for people involved. At the very least the amount of time involved would be enourmous and the WELL staff has PLENTY to do outside of talking about itslef online...

As a customer, I am simply very, very curious about what is going on...

As a person, I also assume that David and Cliff will either talk about this privatley, or not, depending upon how they each personally feel they can handle it.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
23: Hoover Chan (hchan) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:21) 3 lines

I have to agree with onezie that the other sides of this issue will have to be heard before any final judgement is made. Nevertheless, this seems to point to poor communications being one of the issues.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
24: jeff berchenko (jb) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:28) 6 lines

Yes, that's right. I'd love to hear what Cliff has to say.

However, combined with the "oh, by the way, the Well has new ownership" posting, it is once again indicative of the situation that seems to make us all business customers of a private entity that for all practical purposes is owned by Stewart Brand and run by Cliff Figallo.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
25: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:28) 7 lines

Well, in the case of Matisse's job, there was a decision to create a position, it was announced to the staff and then advertised publically online. Several people applied and Matisse was selected. With the new technical director, it was not announced to the staff and not advertised. So I never had a chance to apply for it. I don't know why one job should be advertised and the other one not.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
26: Unsociable Realist (pdil) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:29) 7 lines

It also raises the question of WHAT precisely the WELL is...Management keeps insisting it's a "business", pure and simple. But I think they're wrong. I think the level of accountability to consumers has got to be a lot higher than that.

I'll miss you, David. I agree with hchan and onezie that there are other sides of the issue.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
27: jeff berchenko (jb) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:30) 1 line

What happened to Kenton?

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
28: Gerald Feeney (mileston) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:31) 1 line

I'll miss you, too, David. Our acquaintance has been too brief.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
29: Cliff Figallo (fig) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:37) 37 lines

Before everyone stampedes here, I'd like to say my piece if I may.

As most of you who have experienced the ongoing technical difficulties on the WELL would probably agree, the WELL needs more technical management. This means that it needs planning, quality control, communcations with customers and within the staff itself and good solid budgeting and proposals to get us out of our bootstrapping crisis-to-crisis mentality.

The main impetus for a proposal to rethink our approach to technical competence came, over the last couple months, from our Customer Service department. From John Hoag (loca) and Nancy Rhine (nancy) who deal day to day with the complaints and whose jobs are defined around pleasing our customers. They found themselves unsupported by improvements in technical performance or explanation and through our discussion of how we visioned that things could improve, John developed a _proposal_ that included the creation of a position of Technical Manager.

It is my position as manager to decide who to hire in what position. I did not approach David about this position because I believe that he is competent as a System Administrator. I don't see him as manager. I don't know why he put up with the technical chaos that went on over the past six-plus months either. I have not hired Loca for the position. It is still in the proposal stage. I do know that I am not a technical manager and that I need someone with certain skills in such a position.

This public quitting comes as a surprise to me. David did express that he was angry about the proposal and that he was looking around at other possibilities where he could administer systems with "40 or 50 users" in the area. I offered him the chance to redefine his job however he wanted, with less liability for answering the tons of email and phone support that drew him away from syoperly duties. I told him that he would not necessarily be working under the technical manager but would have, like the rest of the staff, certain standards and duties to uphold.

I am shocked that he chose to announce his action in this manner and with such spin on it.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
30: Tom Mandel (mandel) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:37) 6 lines
<scribbled>

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
31: Tom Mandel (mandel) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:41) 18 lines

>26...

I disagree that accountability to customers extends to discussing personnel matters.

In general, I think discussing personnel issues publicly like this is a very bad idea. I have no opinion that I wish to state about Kenton's departure and David's surprise resignation, except to say that David is making a very serious mistake by raising this issue in this fashion, and everyone here is compounding the mistake.

I would think that most people here would realize that Cliff and other WELL employees are legally constrained about how much they can say about personnel matters.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
32: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:43) 5 lines

However Cliff also agreed with me on Tuesday (before I left) that with loca leap-frogging in that there would be no way I'd ever catch up in advancement as the WELL grew, that my potential would be limited. I don't remember Cliff saying that he didn't consider me managerial potential.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
33: Tina Loney (onezie) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:45) 2 lines

Is that really what Cliff is saying here, dhawk? It didn't come across that way to me.....

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
34: Cliff Figallo (fig) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:45) 3 lines

And I am further shocked that he would not come and talk to me face to face about it and leave us with no notice to find and train a replacement in such a critical position.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
35: And in that dream I'll look it up (sonia) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:46) 1 line

David, I am sorry to see you go. You know we'll all miss you a lot.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
36: linda d. misek-falkoff (ldmf) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:51) 5 lines

just want to ask why DHAWK shouldn't be on the WELL still? If he wants, I just assume he will be. We may not have standing to ask him for technical help -- or we could open a topic where we raise questions he could browse and just respond if he wanted, like some of us now get back to each other -- ??

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
37: Axon, A Man and His Ilk (axon) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (09:55) 46 lines

more history:

i came to the well three years ago, and all i knew about unix was that it was sort of like dos, only worse. over the first year i bombarded dhawk with system questions. even when we were disagreeing in some ongoing topic somewhere, he was unfailingly courteous (which consideration i have not always enjoyed from other members of staff and management) and thorough in his attempts to help me understand the environment.

one of the practical results of my enhanced understanding of unix is that i am now a unix system administrator and all-purpose techweenie, which job represents a complete career change. i have had other sources of support and training since then, of course, but i owe the satisfaction i enjoy in my job to david hawkins.

i don't know that dhawk would be better suited to the position as described. i don't pretend to tell cliff how to run his business. ha, ha. but it does seem sort of weird that a senior technical position would even be considered without dhawk being mentioned in the same breath.

which isn't to downplay loca's significant contribution, at all. he's created some amazing tools, with exhaustive documentation, testing, review and support. and he belled the cat by drafting a much-needed (imho) technical management proposal. as fig says, he hasn't been offered or accpted the position. no disrespect intended to john.

what i don't understand (and i acknowledge that it is none of my business) is how cliff and david, two of the most respectful, sensitive and fundamentally *decent* people i've had the privilege of criticizing, could have reached this impasse.

david says cliff will not even consider him for the job. cliff says he offered to restructure david's duties in practically any way that suited him. my gut instinct is that there is more communication to be pursued. perhaps the well can keep dhawk and all can be resolved constructively. perhaps i'm dreaming.

in any case, david, send me your resume. i feel like i owe you a job. matter of fact, post pointers to it; considering the goodwill you've built up here, i doubt you'll be unemployed long. cliff, just to be on the safe side, maybe you should post yours, too.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
38: Tom Mandel (mandel) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (10:00) 2 lines

I think this topic should be killed, promptly.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
39: Not the Sanest Person on the WELL (kls) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (10:14)
3 lines

Thank you for your opinion, Mr. Mandel.

I think it's a valuable, indeed necessary discussion and should continue.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
40: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (10:18) 3 lines

Hmm, boy, is my face red. I let my anger get the best of me. I am sorry. I'm going to freeze this and then I'm going to cool off and find a better way to approach this.

Topic 206: Why I Quit - dhawk
41: David Hawkins (dhawk) Thu, Jul 11, '91 (13:13) 1 line

I'm also retiring it for the moment.

Response not possible. Pass?